



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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RELAY MISSOURI for Hearing and Speech Impaired 1-800-735-2966 VOICE 1-800-735-2466

Julia M. Eckstein
Director



Matt Blunt
Governor

December 15, 2005

Honorable Jeff Kendall, Mayor
City of Herculaneum
City Hall
1 Parkwood Drive
Herculaneum, MO 63048

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Superfund

Dear Mayor Kendall:

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) has reviewed the issue of reoccupying homes owned by the Doe Run Company located within the Voluntary Property Purchase (VPP) area of Herculaneum. As you know, according to the settlement agreement between the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Doe Run Company, homes within the VPP may only be reoccupied with the joint approval of DHSS, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the City of Herculaneum. DHSS does not believe that these homes should be reoccupied because recontamination is occurring, bringing with it the potential for lead exposure.

There is a strong history of elevated lead levels in the community of Herculaneum, both in the children and in the environment. In 2001, 56% of the children living within 0.25 miles of Doe Run's Herculaneum Lead Smelter had an elevated blood lead level. At the same time, lead concentrations measured in ambient air, homes, yard soils, and streets were extremely high. In addition to the VPP Program, a number of actions have taken place to reduce the amount of uncontrolled lead in Herculaneum. Additional controls have been put in place at the smelter to decrease the amount of lead released to the environment. Some improvements have been made in the way lead is transported through Herculaneum. Contaminated soil has been removed from residential yards and replaced with clean soil. Public meetings and health education have been provided to increase awareness of the issue and provide information on preventative actions which people may take to decrease exposure to environmental lead.

Despite these actions, studies conducted by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency show that residential properties that have already been cleaned up within 0.8 miles of the facility are becoming recontaminated. Because of this documented recontamination and the attendant risk of lead exposure, residential use of this property is not a sustainable long-term use of the VPP area. However, there are land uses, such as industrial or commercial, which present sustainable opportunities for property use in this area.

As always, we are willing to work with you, the regulatory agencies, Doe Run and others to ensure that Herculaneum is a safe and productive place to live. If you would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to contact Gale Carlson or Cherri Baysinger of my staff at 573/751-6102.

Sincerely,

Julia M. Eckstein
Director

JME/CB/vcs

www.dhss.mo.gov

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services protects and promotes quality of life and health for all Missourians by developing and implementing programs and systems that provide: information and education, effective regulation and oversight, quality services, and surveillance of diseases and conditions.

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